

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF AVERY

The Avery County Board of Commissioners met in a Joint Meeting with the Avery County Board of Education on Monday, January 12, 2009 at 3:30 p.m. in the Commissioners Boardroom, Avery County Administrative Complex, Newland, NC.

Members Present: Phyllis Forbes, Vice Chair; Scott Heath; Martha Hicks; Glenn Johnson

Members Absent: Kenny Poteat, Chairman

Board of Education Members Present: John Greene, Chairman; Jamey Johnson; Phil Shomaker; Kathy Aldridge; Marty Dellinger; Dr. Keith Eades, Superintendent; Jeff Jaynes; Diane Jaynes; Danny Clark

Call To Order

Phyllis Forbes, Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m.

John Greene, Chairman Board of Education called the meeting to order at 3:38 p.m.

Scott Heath led prayer.

Ms. Forbes read a letter aloud from Chairman Kenny Poteat who was unable to attend the meeting due to scheduling conflicts. Mr. Poteat wrote:

“I am sorry I cannot be with you this afternoon. Just a word to remind us all of the importance of the vote on February 3, 2009. Our opposition is taking this very seriously and we must respond. I would hope that we would approach this vote with all the passion of a Duke versus Carolina basketball game. Thank you and let us get to work.”

Land Transfer Tax

Robert Wiseman, County Manager, reported that the steering committee met just before this meeting to discuss the Real Property Transfer Tax.

Mr. Wiseman stated that there is misleading information going out to the public that calls the Real Property Transfer Tax a “home tax”. He stated that this was not a tax on your home it was a fee when real property was transferred.

Phyllis Forbes stated that the public needed to be educated about the Real Property Transfer tax. Mr. Wiseman advised that our local realtors were not pushing this because the local people care about the seniors and young couples but the machine in Greensboro, North Carolina does not. Mr. Wiseman stated that word of mouth and eye to eye contact is the best way to get out the information about the Real Property Transfer Tax. He said that he had visited several schools and the common concern was that the money would not be used for the schools. Mr.

Wiseman advised that possibly if this fee was passed that there could be periodic reports given on how the money was being spent. Phillip Shomaker said that this is one of the few opportunities that we have to do something for our children and it seems to be an opportunity of a lifetime. John Greene, Chairman of the Board of Education, stated that if Avery County can build up our schools that this can help with economic stability in the county and helps the County as a whole. Martha Hicks advised that everyone should try to get people to go out and vote in early voting.

Kahn Construction Management Firm

Dr. Keith Eades, Superintendent Avery County Schools, reported that the planning of the Banner Elk School was underway and one of the things as far as the maintenance staff and finance officer has been exploring is the option of using a construction management firm with the project. Dr. Eades introduced Rick Ott from MB Kahn Construction Management Firm. Dr. Eades stated that he knew Mr. Ott and worked with him in Currituck County on construction of two schools.

Mr. Rick Ott, MB Kahn Construction Management Firm gave a slide presentation about the company and explained the benefits of hiring a construction management firm. Mr. Ott stated that 65% of MB Kahn’s work is construction and program management and of the 65%, 90% is educational work. Mr. Ott showed some examples of schools built and the construction managed by the MB Kahn Construction Management Firm. John Greene asked about the fee charged by the firm. Mr. Ott stated that his fee was the same on every job and that is 3 ½% of construction cost. He said there is a general condition cost that is approximately 1 ½ to 2 % dependent on the length of time and the complexity of the project.

Diane Jaynes stated that when Crossnore Elementary School was constructed there were the wrong size boilers put in and heating and air conditioning connections that were put in upside down because there was no project manager overseeing the project. Ms. Forbes advised that it is the charge of each Board to look after taxpayer’s money and how it is spent and that both Board’s needed to consider having someone to oversee the Banner Elk School project.

Puckett Property

Ms. Forbes stated that the Board of Commissioners wanted to discuss the Puckett Property and the possible disposition of this piece of property. The County Manager advised that the Puckett Property has been declared by the Board of Commissioners as surplus property. He stated that it was determined after the preliminary footprint was presented to the Board that this piece of property was situated in such a way that it would have no immediate use on the current footprint. The County Manager stated there was an appraisal on the Puckett Property and that there was an interest by some people in purchasing this piece of property. Glenn Johnson advised that he wanted to

see if the Board of Education had a need for this piece of property. Dr. Eades stated that there has been no discussion at this time with the Board of Education members and Dr. Eades asked that this be brought up at the next quarterly meeting. The County Manager said that there was approximately one acre of the Puckett Property. He said there is 10.25 acres in the entire tract but it is bisected by the trout stream and the acreage across the stream on the northeast side of the property is not figured in with the school project. Mr. Johnson stated it was probably a two edged sword because it might not be a good time to sell because of the economy but if there is someone interested in this property that needs to be looked at also. Scott Heath advised that buildings left vacant begin to deteriorate. Dr. Eades asked that the Board of Education have some time to discuss this and bring this issue back to the next quarterly meeting in March.

Motion by Scott Heath and second by Martha Hicks to adjourn this joint meeting at 4:50 p.m. Motion unanimously approved.

Motion by Marty Dellinger and second by Kathy Aldridge to recess the Board of Education meeting at 4:50 p.m. and reconvene in their regularly scheduled meeting. Motion unanimously approved.

Phyllis Forbes, Vice-Chair
Avery County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:_____

Cindy Turbyfill, Clerk